The Constitution
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium
of the
State of New York

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THE

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium

OF THE

STATE OF NEW YORK,

AND

ADJACENT STATES AND COUNTRIES.

Revised and Adopted in General Synod, Sept. 3, A. D. 1816.

THIRD EDITION.

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CONSTITUTION.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Title or Name.

We, whose names are underwritten, ministers and representatives of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in the state of New York, and other states and countries, having united ourselves into a body, to be governed by the following constitution, call this association "The Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of the State of New York, and Adjacent States and Countries," and each meeting of this body "A Synod of the Ministerium."

CHAPTER II.

Of the President of the Ministerium.

§ 1. The president is chosen by ballot, from among the ordained ministers who are regular members of the association, by a majority of the votes of the ordained ministers, candidates and lay delegates; and in making this choice, particular respect is to be paid to learning, judgment, character and merit.

§ 2. The president remains in office during the term of three years, at the expiration of which, however, he may be re-elected.

§ 3. He presides and has the inspection in all meetings of the Ministerium.

§ 4. He is at liberty to take an active part in the

discussions of the house, even as the rest of the members.

§ 5. When, on any question, the house is equally divided, he has the casting vote. In all other cases, he has no suffrage; except only when an election is made by ballot, and then he has not the casting vote.

§ 6. With the approbation of the house, he appoints all committees, and is, *ex officio*, a member of each of them. In cases of difference, each of the contending parties is at liberty to choose one person, to which the president shall add a third, to constitute a committee.

§ 7. In all meetings of the Ministerium, the president, with the advice of the pastor of the place, appoints the individuals who are to preach.

§ 8. He performs the ordinations, assisted by two or more ministers of his own choice, in the public congregation; selects the persons, who, besides himself, are to examine candidates; and gives to approved candidates letters of license, which, as well as letters of orders, he is to subscribe with his official signature, seal with the seal of the Ministerium, and deliver to those to whom they belong.

§ 9. He is to sign the minutes of each synod in the journal; to sign and deliver copies of resolutions, passed in the synod, to those whom they concern; and to see, that, immediately after each synod, all documents relating thereto be placed in the archives.

§ 10. It is an important part of his office to give counsel to every member of this body, when he deems it expedient, and particularly to admonish and advise every erring brother.

§ 11. If, in the recess of the Ministerium, the president should be prevented by sickness from attending to the business of the Ministerium, should be disabled or disqualified for the functions of his office, should remove to a distant state or country, or should be removed by death: then, in any of these cases, the

secretary of the Ministerium shall act as president. And, should the secretary, in any of these cases, be himself thus prevented, disabled, disqualified or removed, then the treasurer of the Ministerium shall be authorized to fulfill the duties of the president. Should any of these cases, however, occur, the power, herein directed to be then exercised, by the secretary or the treasurer, shall not belong to him after the recovery of the president or the secretary from the sickness or other disability which prevented the one or the other from attending to the business of the Ministerium. And should the president depart this life, then the secretary, or upon his dicease the treasurer, shall be invested with the authority of the president only until the next general synod of the Ministerium.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Secretary.

§ 1. The secretary of the Ministerium is to be elected out of the number of ordained ministers, who are regular members of this body, by ballot, by a majority of the votes of the ordained ministers, candidates and lay delegates; and, in choosing this officer, attention is to be paid to superior skill, punctuality and fidelity.

§ 2. The secretary holds his office during three years, and, like the president, is eligible again at the expiration of that term.

§ 3. He is to write letters, letters of orders, letters of license, &c. Letters of orders, letters of license, and other honorable certificates must be fairly and neatly written on parchment.

§ 4. He is to attest by his official signature, all letters of orders, letters of license, resolutions concerning ministers, delegates or churches, and the minutes of the synod in the journal, when signed by the president.

§ 5. He is to address letters of invitation to all the regular members of the Ministerium, and to the vestries of such churches as may be vacant, making known to them the time and place of such meeting of the Ministerium; of which he shall also give notice in some public newspaper or newspapers, at least six weeks previous to the meeting.

§ 6. He is to keep a register of the names of all ordained ministers and candidates united with this body, of their respective places of abode, of the several congregations for which they officiate, and of all vacant congregations.

§ 7. He is to keep in his possession and custody the archives and the seal of the Ministerium.

§ 8. If, during the recess of the Ministerium, the secretary should be disabled or disqualified to hold his office, or should remove beyond the jurisdiction of this Ministerium, or should depart this life, the president shall require the archives and the seal of the Ministerium to be delivered to himself, and shall appoint another minister to act as secretary until the next annual synod meeting of the Ministerium.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Treasurer.

§ 1. The treasurer of the Ministerium is to be elected from among the ordained ministers, who are regular members of the association, in the manner pointed out for the election of the president and secretary; and, like them, is to hold his office for three years, but may be re-elected.

§ 2. It shall be his duty to receive and have the care of all moneys belonging to this body; to pay all sums ordered to be expended by the Ministerium; and to keep and deliver at each of its annual meetings an exact account of the state of the treasury.

§ 3. When entering upon his office, the treasurer

shall give to the president a bond, duly executed, with at least one good and sufficient surety, for the repayment of the whole amount of the moneys, which then are or thereafter while he continues in office may be in the treasury; which bond shall be kept in the archives.

§ 4. If the state of the funds should, in his judgment and that of the president, make it advisable, he may, with the consent of the president, invest a part of them in some public stock, or lend them to individuals at lawful interest and upon unexceptionable securities; in such a way, however, that the whole, or such parts as the Ministerium may require, may be recovered at a short notice.

§ 5. If, in the recess of the Ministerium, the treasurer should remove to a distant state or country, or should be removed by death, the president shall appoint another minister, to hold this office until the next general meeting of the Ministerium; and shall take proper measures for the delivery into his hands of all moneys, certificates, bonds, or other documents held by the person who shall have removed or be deceased, in the name of this association.

CHAPTER V.

Of Ordained Ministers.

§ 1. All ordained ministers are perfectly equal as to rank, title and privileges, having no power, the one over the other, except only what the before described offices make necessary for the maintenance of order and the well being of the whole association. Although they are not to neglect or slight any good advice imparted by the president, still they have no overseer in their respective congregations, and each is to be regarded as the bishop of his own church.

§ 2. One minister, of course, shall not interfere with the congregation or office of another, by preach-

ing or performing other ministerial duties, except at the request or with the consent of the other.

§ 3. In all cases of controversy or difference between two ministers, or between a minister and his congregation, which they can not amicaby settle by their own endeavors, or by the mediation of the president, the parties, or either of them, may make application to the Ministerium in synod convened, and shall abide by its decisions. If it appear to the Ministerium, that the controversy between a minister and his congregation has proceeded such lengths as to preclude all hope of its favorable termination, and that a dissolution of the connection which exists between them is necessary to restore the peace and promote the prosperity of the church, the Ministerium shall recommend to such minister to resign his charge of his congregation, on such conditions as to the Ministerium may appear reasonable and proper. And if such minister or congregation refuse to comply with such recommendation, the Ministerium may, at its discretion, proceed to suspend the former from the exercise of all ministerial functions within the congregations in connection with this body, and refuse to the latter a representation and seat in the synod, until they submit to the terms of the recommendation.

§ 4. If a minister be convicted of criminal or immoral conduct, before his congregation, his church council, a court of justice or this Ministerium, upon a fair and sufficient investigation, he shall be disowned or suspended at the discretion of the Ministerium. If, however, the Ministerium should be afterwards convinced, that he has sincerely repented and reformed his life, he may, after sufficient trial and proof, be restored to his former office, and be recommended to congregations other than that in which he had been charged with the crime or immorality, on account of which he was suspended or disowned.

§ 5. Each minister has a right to adopt such regulations in his own congregation, as circumstances may require, and as are consistent with the spirit of Christianity and the harmony of his church. But in the exercise of this right, as much unity and agreement with the usages and regulations of sister churches, as conscientiously can be, is to be preserved.

§ 6. Each minister has a right to leave one church and remove to another. Yet, in so weighty a concern, he should be especially careful to act deliberately and conscientiously as before God; and he must give the president timely notice of his intended removal.

§ 7. If any minister, belonging to this body, removes to another state or country, and accepts a call to a congregation not connected with an Evangelical Ministerium, giving the president due notice of the same, and attending as often as may be the synods of this Ministerium, he shall still be considered as a *regular* member of this association.

§ 8. If any minister, belonging to this body, removes to another state or country, accepts a call to a congregation which is connected with another Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium, and gives the president due notice of his removal, he shall be considered as an *honorary* member of this Ministerium, receive a certificate of his official standing and connection with it, and retain his seat and vote in its synod, but not be eligible to any office. Should he, however, neglect to inform the president of his intended removal to another state or country, he shall no longer be regarded as a member of this association.

§ 9. If an ordained minister, regularly united with this body, shall relinquish his ministerial office and pursue another profession, he shall no longer enjoy the privileges of a member of this Ministerium. And if any ordained minister, who is a regular member of this body, resigns his pastoral charge, or is deserted

by his congregation, and is not afterwards regularly settled in some other congregation as a pastor, though he desires to be so settled, he shall, so long as he is devoid of a congregation, retain his seat, but shall not have a vote in the synod, nor be eligible to any office. If, however, a regular member of this Ministerium, though not officiating as the pastor of a congregation, shall be employed by the Ministerium as a missionary, or shall be engaged as a professor, tutor, or instructor of youth in some college, academy or general seminary of learning, and perform ministerial duties as often as his other engagements will admit, he shall retain both his seat and vote in the synods of this body.

§ 10. If a minister, ordained by a bishop, convention, presbytery, association or council, of another denomination, shall apply for admission into this Ministerium, the Ministerium being satisfied, on proper examination, that he is a man of piety and unexceptionable character, and that he possesses the literary and other qualifications, may receive him into the same, without re-ordination, and give him a seat therein, two thirds of the ordained ministers present consenting thereto; and if he be callled to the regular exercise of a pastoral office in a Lutheran congregation connected with this Ministerium, he shall be entitled both to a seat and a vote, even as the other members of this Ministerium, upon his acceding to this constitution.

§ 11. Ministers, ordained by an Evangelical Lutheran Institution, or by an Evangelican Lutheran Consistory or Ministerium in the United States, or in a foreign country, must exhibit satisfactory evidence, if thought requisite, of the authenticity of their letters of orders, and of their good character and ministerial standing at the time they removed from another state or foreign country, if they wish to be received into this Ministerium. If no objections against them are made and sustained

by two thirds of the ordained ministers in synod assembled, they shall, upon their acceding to this constitution, be admitted to a seat in this body ; and, if called to the charge of a congregation connected with it, shall be entitled to a right to vote, and to all other privileges of regular members of this association.

§ 12. An ordained minister, belonging to any other Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium, and occasionally visiting the sydod of this association, shall be entitled to a seat and have liberty to join in the debates of the same ; but can have no right to vote or to offer motions.

§ 13. Each ordained minister, possessed of suitable abilities, erudition and leisure, shall be at liberty to assist and prepare young men, who wish to devote themselves to the study of theology and the office of the ministry, by verbal instruction, the use of proper books, and practical directions. And, when any such student has acquired a competent share of theological knowledge, and gives evidence of sincere piety by an irreproachable deportment, his preceptor may permit him to make trial of his acquirements by lecturing or preaching within the limits of his own congregation, or of that of another minister who may request it.

§ 14. Every ordained minister shall keep a register of baptisms and marriages at which he officiates, of the communicants, of those who have confirmed their baptismal vows, and also those who have died within his congregation or congregations, unless these registers shall be kept by some officer of his church ; and the books in which such registers shall be contained, shall be and continue the property of the congregation, for which the minister officiates.

CHAPTER VI.

Of Candidates for Orders.

§ 1. Every person who wishes to be considered as a candidate for the ministry in the churches connected with this Ministerium, shall give due notice to the president of his intention to apply for a license; and such person shall not indulge in any conduct or amusements, unfavorable to that seriousness or those pious and studious habits, which become those who are preparing for the holy ministry.

§ 2. Every person who desires to be received by this body as a candidate, must be twenty-one years old; must make application to the Ministerium in synod convened, or, in its recess, to the president; and must produce testimonials concerning his abilities, the regular time and course of his theological studies, and the piety and virtue of his life.

§ 3. If he applies to the president during the recess of the Ministerium, and the president and secretary, after due examination, are satisfied respecting his character and proficiency, they may give him a license to officiate as a candidate until the next session of the Ministerium.

§ 4. If he applies to the Ministerium, and his testimonials are found to be sufficient by a majority of the ordained ministers, the president shall propose him for examination by a suitable committee.

§ 5. The intention of the examination here directed shall be to ascertain that the person applying for a license is well acquainted with the phraseology, doctrines and books of the Holy Scriptures, and the evidences of Christianity; that he can read the New Testament in the original Greek; that he has a competent knowledge of the Latin tongue, natural and moral philosophy, and church history; and that he has paid attention to composition and pulpit eloquence. It is also declared to be desirable, that

every candidate should be acquainted with the Hebrew and German languages. But the Ministerium may dispense with the knowledge of some of these branches of learning, if the person applying for a license promises to endeavor to acquire it, and is possessed of other qualifications peculiarly fitting him for the Gospel ministry.

§ 6. Besides subjecting himself to such an examination, each person, who wishes to be received as a candidate, must produce and read to the committee a sermon or discourse, composed by himself, on some passage of scripture; and must, if thought necessary, answer questions which may be proposed to him by other members of the Ministerium.

§ 7. If, after such an examination, he be approved of by two thirds of the ordained ministers present, he shall be licensed as a candidate for the ministry, before the public congregation, upon his giving a solemn promise to the president, that he will comply with the rules of this constitution.

§ 8. A candidate, so licensed, shall have liberty to visit vacant congregations, either upon receiving an invitation from them, or upon the recommendation of the Ministerium or the president so to do.

§ 9. If his services be requested by any congregation or congregations for a specified period of time, and he agree to render them, he shall be considered as restricted to said congregation or congregations, and shall not leave the same, during that period, without the consent of the Ministerium, or of the president in the recess of the Ministerium.

§ 10. He shall not interfere with another candidate, to whom any particular congregation or congregations have been pointed out by the Ministerium or the president; nor shall he perform any ministerial services in the congregation or congregations of an ordained minister, unless requested by the latter.

§ 11. It shall be his duty to preach the word of

God faithfully, to catechise the young, to visit the sick, to administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to solemnize matrimony, to pursue his theological studies, to receive counsel from the president, and to apply to him for advice in all cases of difficulty.

§ 12. He must keep a general journal of his ministerial acts, which, with a few sermons of his own composition, he must deliver or send every year for the inspection of the Ministerium in synod convened.

§ 13. Without necessity, he is not to absent himself from the meetings of the Ministerium. But, even if by unavoidable circumstances he is prevented from attending the synod, he must excuse his absence in writing, and communicate his journal and sermons, as required in § 12.

§ 14. In the meetings of the Ministerium he has a seat, is entitled to express his opinion, or propose questions on any subject in which he feels an interest, and has a right to vote in the choice of officers by ballot, but in that only.

§ 15. If in congregations, for which he performs ministerial duties, a register of baptisms, &c., is kept, he shall enter therein all baptisms, &c., at which he officiates; and, if no such register exist in those congregations, he shall keep a record of all baptisms, marriages, &c., celebrated by him in said congregations, and either preserve it himself, or transmit it to any minister that may thereafter become the pastor of such congregations.

§ 16. If a licensed candidate should desire to visit congregations connected with another evangelical ministerium, the president shall furnish him with such testimonials as will be likely to procure him a friendly reception from the officers of such ministerium.

§ 17. If a congregation, which has already acceded or wishes to accede to this constitution, or which,

though unconnected with this body, is not connected with another evangelical ministerium, present to a licensed candidate a regular call to become their minister, and engage to give him a regular support, he shall, if determined to accept it, give notice of it to the president, and said congregation shall request his ordination to the work of the ministry. And if no sufficient objections be substantiated against his character and conduct during the period which elapsed after the date of his license, he may be ordained in the next general synod of the Ministerium, or at a meeting of that body specially called for that purpose; provided, that at such special meeting at least two ordained ministers besides the president be present, and that the congregation, for which a candidate is to be ordained, be willing, if need be, to defray the expenses incurred by ministers coming from a distance to said meeting.

§ 18. Ordination is hereby declared to be, in our judgment, the solemn dedication of a man to the Gospel ministry. In this public dedication of a minister, which shall be followed by an earnest charge to him, and by prayer to Almighty God, we account the imposition of the hands of the president and others on his head, an expression of our approval of him, and of our best wishes and prayers for him by these our agents. And that we establish it as a fundamental rule of our Ministerium, that the person to be ordained or licensed, be required to receive, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of our fathers, the Word of God, as contained in the canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and the Augsburg Confession, as a correct exhibition of the fundamental doctrines of the Divine Word, and of the faith of our church founded upon that word; to perform faithfully all other ministerial duties, and regulate his walk and conversation according to the Gospel; and that he will observe this constitution while he remains a member of this Ministerium.

§ 19. Every candidate so ordained shall, if practicable, be introduced into his congregation with a suitable charge both to him and them, by the president, or some other minister appointed for the purpose; or, at least, by letters from the president. And, if it be practicable, this rule shall also be observed with respect to him, should he afterwards remove and settle as pastor with another congregation.

§ 20. If the Ministerium should at any time judge it expedient to send a missionary to any part, to plant churches, or to supply vacancies, in which the service of an ordained minister may be requisite, and a candidate should be found qualified for the performance of such duties, he may, if willing to act as a missionary, be ordained without relation to particular churches.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Lay Delegates, or Representatives of Congregations in the Synod of the Ministerium.

§ 1. Whereas separate congregations, although not dependant one upon another, may need mutual counsel and assistance, and ought to enter into common measures for the promoting of knowledge and religion; and whereas congregations, as well as ministers, have rights which ought to be protected and secured to them, the churches, connected with this Ministerium, shall be entitled to be represented in its synods, by delegates.

§ 2. Every congregation, which has a settled pastor, or is attended by a licensed candidate, has a right to be represented in the synod by one delegate; and every collegiate church by two or more delegates, in proportion to its ministers. Where two or more congregations are united under the care of one pastor or candidate, all such congregations shall have but one representative entitled to a vote. If a congregation, or several united congregations, be without a settled minister, but manifest ability and willing-

ness to support one, such congregation or congregations shall be entitled to a respectful consideration of whatever they may propose or submit to the Ministerium. Where several congregations are united under the care of one minister, if any one of them, having important matters to communicate, should send its own commissioner to the Ministerium along with a delegate legally appointed, such commissioner shall be received and heard, although he can not be admitted as a delegate. And a similar privilege shall be granted to a commissioner, that may be sent from a party in a congregation, believing itself aggrieved, and seeking the interference and mediation of this body.

§ 3. Each lay delegate, claiming a seat in the synod, must exhibit, at the opening of its sessions, a written certificate of his appointment for that purpose, by the elders and deacons, or church council of the congregation or congregations, from which he is sent; except the minister of the same congregation should verbally attest his regular appointment.

§ 4. Each lay delegate shall have a right to take part in the debates of the house, to offer resolutions, and to vote on all questions, except the examining, licensing or ordaining of candidates for the ministry, the admission of ministers into this association or their exclusion from it, and the discussion of weighty articles of faith or cases of conscience.

§ 5. Every congregation, which is represented by a delegate in the synods of this body, is bound to receive and submit to the resolutions and recommendations of the Ministerium, and to bear its part of all expenses and services, necessary for the welfare of the associated churches generally and the advancement of the common cause. And if any congregation perseveres in refusing such submission, it shall no longer be entitled to a representation in this body.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Synod of the Ministerium.

§ 1. The Ministerium shall meet annually in general synod; and in special synod, when called together by the president on his own authority, or when desired to be called together by three ordained ministers, stating to the president sufficient reasons for the request. In calling a special synod, care shall be taken to give seasonable notice to the members and churches.

§ 2. A general synod may consult and deliberate upon all things that regard the churches or ministers; but nothing shall be transacted in a special synod, besides the particular business which occasions it to be called.

§ 3. The synod is composed of the ordained ministers, candidates and lay delegates.

§ 4. Except through unavoidable necessity, (with which voluntary ministerial engagements are not to be reckoned synonymous,) no ordained minister or candidate shall neglect to attend the synod. If such necessity should occur to any, he shall send in a written apology for his absence. If any one neither makes his personal appearance nor sends in his apology for absence, he shall be brought to account by the president at the next meeting. Whosoever is three times successively absent, and does not regularly apologize for it, shall be considered as declaring thereby, that he wishes no longer to be considered as a member of this body, and shall forfeit all right of membership.

§ 5. Those written apologies, as well as all other letters and statements relating to the Ministerium, must be addressed to the president.

§ 6. The minister of the place where the synod is held, with the vestry of the church, shall endeavor

to provide for the entertainment of the ministers, candidates and lay delegates, by Christian friends.

§ 7. As the sessions of the synod are, if possible, always to begin on Monday, the ministers and candidates shall endeavor to assemble on the preceding Saturday, in order that the president, with the advice of the pastor of the place, may regulate the appointments for preaching.

§ 8. In the place where a general synod is held, divine worship shall be celebrated and a sermon preached as often as shall be convenient and consistent with the business of the synod.

§ 9. Each session of the synod shall commence at the hour previously appointed by the president of the Ministerium; and from the beginning to the close of all the sessions, no regular member shall absent himself without the permission of the president.

§ 10. At the time appointed for the first session, the synod shall be organized, even if but four ordained ministers, regular members of the Ministerium, and as many lay delegates should be present.

§ 11. If any regular member of the Ministerium, except only the pastor of the place, shall not appear in synod until an hour after the appointed time of meeting, he may be reproved by the president.

§ 12. Should the president himself be absent at the proper time for proceeding to business, the members present shall choose a president *pro tempore.*

§ 13. If the secretary shall not be present, the president shall appoint one *pro tempore.*

§ 14. The transactions of the synod shall be conducted in the following order, viz :

1. The president shall open the first session of the synod with prayer. In his absence, this shall be done by the secretary; and in the absence of both, by one of the elder ministers.

2. After prayer, the secretary shall register the

names of the ministers, candidates and lay delegates present.

3. After this, the lay delegates shall exhibit the certificates of their regular appointment by the congregations which they represent.

4. The president shall give information of all business transacted by himself or by any special synod, since the adjournment of the Ministerium, and of all letters and important advices which he may have received, having any connexion with the concerns of the Ministerium.

5. If the period for the election of a president, secretary or treasurer, has arrived, or if the office of any of them shall be vacated by death, resignation, &c., the election shall then take place.

6. The minutes of the last synod shall be read.

7. Each member shall then present any letters to be communicated, or verbally give notice of the business which he may wish to lay before the Ministerium.

8. The secretary shall register the different articles in order as they are represented; shall number all written documents, so that their number shall correspond with the minutes of the synod; and shall enter on the minutes the names of ministers and candidates, who do or do not excuse their non-attendance.

9. Each minister shall then give a written or verbal account of the number of those whom he has baptized, buried, and admitted to the right of confirmation and to the Lord's Supper.

10. The treasurer's account shall be delivered and inspected; all demands against the Ministerium shall be rendered, examined, and, if correct, allowed; and the contributions presented by churches or individuals shall be received; of all which notice shall be carefully taken in the minutes.

11. Each article of business shall then be intro-

duced in regular order, and the documents relating to it be publicly read. For the convenience, however, of delegates coming from remote congregations, their concerns may be first attended to.

12. The synod shall then determine the time when, and the place where, the next general synod shall be convened, which shall be decided by the majority; or shall empower the president to call it together when and where he shall think fit the following year.

13. At the close of any synodical session, a meeting of the ordained ministers and candidates may, on notice of the president, be held. In this meeting the Ministerium, strictly so called, shall consider and decide upon all those matters, which belong particularly to its province; such as the examining, licensing, or ordaining of candidates for the ministry, the admission of ministers into this association, or their exclusion from it. At this meeting, also, consultations may take place, respecting the best methods of discharging ministerial functions, and promoting the spread of truth and piety, and weighty articles of faith or cases of conscience may receive a friendly discussion; provided always, however, that the first principle of Protestantism, the right of free inquiry, be not infringed, and no attempt be made to erect the Ministerium into an inquisitorial tribunal.

14. Each session of the synod and Ministerium shall be opened and closed with prayer, to which office the president shall appoint the person. The last session shall be closed with prayer by the president.

§ 15. No member of the synod or Ministerium shall call the president or any other member out of the meeting for the purpose of communicating to him any private matters, unless these should be of very great moment.

§ 16. It shall be the president's duty to maintain quietness and order in the meetings; to see that two

or more do not speak at the same time ; and to secure to each person liberty to speak without interruption, except such cases as militate against established rules.

§ 17. The president shall also take care, that each subject be duly considered and canvassed, before a decision be had. He shall distinctly rehearse each motion which is made and seconded, when no one has any further observation to offer, and take the sense of the synod on the same.

§ 18. When the members are to give their votes on any question, all further observations are inadmissable. They are to give their opinion simply by yea or nay.

§ 19. If the business of the synod should require it, the president shall appoint one or more to assist the secretary.

CHAPTER IX.

Miscellaneous Articles.

§ 1. All the minutes, acts, decisions, &c., of the Ministerium, shall be drawn up and framed in the English language. Translations, however, shall be given in the German, if requested or needed.

§ 2. The archives shall be placed under the care of the secretary, who shall be accountable for their safe keeping. In them shall be entered and preserved all letters, petitions, complaints, &c., addressed to the Ministerium, together with all answers, judgments, notifications, &c. The documents of each synod shall be preserved together, and regularly endorsed with the date of the year to which they belong. Any minister or delegate of a congregation, connected with this body, shall have free access to them ; but no part of them shall be allowed to be taken away,or destroyed or mislaid.

§ 3. The seal of the Ministerium consists of two fields. That on the right hand contains a double

eagle hovering over a vine, in commemoration of Germany and the evangelical church planted in that country.—That on the left represents an eagle flying from the east to the west, and hovering over the vine, intimating that the evangelican church in America is a branch transplanted from Europe. On the top is a crown, with the sun and twelve stars, and the moon below them, as an emblem of the church of Christ, according to the figurative description given in Rev. xii, 1.

§ 4. If any other Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium in the United States shall send a commissioner or delegate to attend the annual synod of this association, such commissioner or delegate shall be received and have the right to vote in all its proceedings, as well as in the meetings of the Ministerium, strictly so called, after the business of the synod is despatched; provided, that such ministerium grant equal rights and privileges to a commissioner deputed from this body.

§ 5. The Ministerium, and, in its recess, the president, shall endeavor to furnish supplies to vacant congregations, as far as such can be obtained. Small congregations, unable to support a minister, shall be directed and encouraged to appoint some member of the same, of suitable character and capacities, to read prayers and sermons, together with the Holy Scriptures, in their meetings on the Lord's day; the prayers being those contained in the printed liturgy of this Ministerium, and the sermons such as the president may select or approve.

§ 6. If an alteration of any of the foregoing articles, or an addition of new ones should be thought necessary, the motion for such alteration or addition must be laid on the table in one synod, and, if seconded, the final decision shall be given in the next. But no alteration in, or addition to, this constitution

shall be made, unless two thirds of the members agree thereto.

We, the subscribers, do hereby declare, that we consider this constitution as the basis of our ecclesiastical union, and pledge ourselves before God to regulate our conduct according to these articles of agreement.

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